

## Student Resource 1.4

### What is Brainstorming?

Brainstorming is a process of spontaneous thinking used by an individual or by a group of people to generate numerous alternative ideas while deferring judgment. Introduced by Alex Osborn in his book *Applied Imagination*, brainstorming is the crux of each of the stages of all problem-solving methods.



#### RULES FOR BRAINSTORMING

**NO CRITICISM ALLOWED.** People tend to automatically evaluate each suggested idea—their own as well as others. Both internal and external criticisms are to be avoided while brainstorming. Neither positive nor negative comments are **allowed**. **Either type inhibits the free flow of thought and requires time, which interferes with the next rule.** Write each spoken idea down as it is given, and move on.

**WORK FOR QUANTITY.** Alex Osborn stated that "Quantity breeds quality." People must experience a "braindrain" (get all the common responses out of the way) **before the innovative, creative ideas can surface; therefore, the more ideas, the more likely they are to be quality ideas.**

**HITCHHIKING WELCOME.** Hitchhiking occurs when one member's idea produces a similar idea or an enhanced idea in another member. **All ideas should be recorded.**

**FREEWHEELING ENCOURAGED.** Outrageous, humorous, and seemingly unimportant ideas should be recorded. It is not uncommon for the most off-the-wall comment to be one wherein lies the solution for the problem.